Madrasat Ahlul'Bait Islamic School

Grade 4 Akhlaq

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Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area

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In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious Most Merciful

Foreword

The material presented in this document is a result of an effort made by the personnel of the school of Ahlul'Bait of the Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area Islamic Center at San Jose, California in cooperation with several schools of Ahlul'Bait at London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota and Toronto.

We, at San Jose, looked at material from London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota, Toronto and Irvine's Islamic institutions, as well as that available at various web-sites to compile age appropriate textbooks for use by our students. We thank the institutions that were kind enough to provide us with the electronic files of their curriculum. We used some of what they had and added to it what we felt was appropriate. We included more worksheets and pictures where deemed necessary. We also added some new topics that, we felt are important to the students.

We had two important goals in mind while working on this document. First, introduce the students to the important Islamic concepts and beliefs that are crucial for him/her to know. Second, expose the students to as many Quranic verses and sayings from Prophet Muhammad (p) and his Ahlul'Bait (a) as possible.

We thank Hujjatul Islam Maulana Nabi Raza Abidi for his spiritual guidance. We hope future efforts will continue taking place until reaching our goal of having a strong, rich and unified curriculum for the schools of Ahlul'Bait for all ages.

Syllabus Committee
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait

Preface

In fourth grade Akhlaq the student is introduced to many facets of good behavior and mannerisms. Since Akhlaq is our behavior towards others it is a very important aspect of Islam. It teaches our students what to do to become more humane. Good Akhlaq increases the nobility of our character. It is hence, a form of practical tabligh to non-Muslims. There are therefore a variety of topics considered under this title and continue in later books too.

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SECTION I: Akhlaq (for Fiqh Class)

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Chapter 1: Merits of Good Akhlaq

The Holy Prophet (S) has said:
"I have been sent by Allah to teach people good manners"

The above hadith shows us how important good Akhlaq (manners) is considered in Islam. Akhlaq is a general term that refers to conduct and behaviour. Let us look at how important it is.

A person once came to the Holy Prophet (s) and said that there was a woman who observed fast during daytime and spent her nights in prayers, but she was ill-mannered and hurt her neighbours with her tongue.

The Holy Prophet (s) said that the old woman was worthless and that she would be one of the inmates of hell.

The above incident tells us that:

Your Good Deeds do NOT count for much if your Akhlaq is bad

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) has said that someone with good Akhlaq gets the same Thawaab as someone who fasts during daytime and prays at night.

The Holy Prophet (s) and our Holy Imams (a) managed to convert a lot of people to Muslims through their good Akhlaq.

Remember that when you are behaving badly out in public, people will not just see a *person* behaving badly but a *Muslim* behaving badly.

You are therefore not only letting yourself and your parents down but also Islam.

Our 12th Imam has left all of us as the caretakers of Islam! Let our behaviour and conduct advertise the positive aspects of Islam.

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1.1 Worksheet: Merits of Good Akhlaq

Write and draw 2 things different than the examples below, that you should not do and 2 things that are good to do:

E.g.: Shouldn't fight:

Should always share:

1. Two things that are good to do:

a. b.

2. Two things one should not do:

a. b.

3. What are some things you do that may be counted as bad Akhlaq?

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Chapter 2: Cleanliness

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an in Surah al-Baqarah (2:222)

> ***... For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean. (Holy Qur'an; 2:222)***

Our Eighth Imam (A) explained that:

> *To be pure and clean is amongst the habits of the Prophets.*

It is very important to remain clean and in a state of purity (Taharat). We should think about cleanliness, not as something that we do or do not do, but as part of us. We should not only keep our physical selves clean, but also our thoughts and actions.

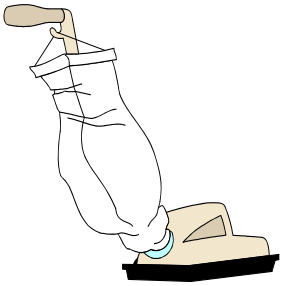
Our soul is like pure water, and that which holds it (our body), is like a vase

Whatever we see through our eyes enters the water of our soul. If we look at bad things, then we are polluting the water and so our soul becomes dirty. When this happens, we start wanting (desiring) to see and do things which will cause us even more harm, until the water of our soul will become so murky that we will suffocate and drown ourselves in its filth and our thoughts and actions will not remain clean. We have to keep our soul uncontaminated by only allowing those things which are virtuous to enter it.

The Prophet (S) said

"There will come a time when people will have unclean inner selves, but beautiful appearances; they will have greed for the worldly affairs and they will not wish for that which is with Allah. Their religion will be for show. Then they would pray like a drowning one, and Allah will not answer their prayer."

Other actions of cleanliness are external. We have always been taught to keep our bodies and our clothes clean, but we should also remember to keep our houses, and the surrounding areas clean. One of the signs of a Muslim is that when he uses something, he leaves it in a cleaner condition then it was before. We should set an example for non-Muslims by keeping the streets free from litter and our houses tidy. If we did this we would give Islam the reputation it deserves.



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We should try to keep clean at all times, but special attention should be given when in the toilet, when eating food, and when getting ready to offer prayers. Let's look at some acts of cleanliness recommended in Islam:

2.1 When Using the toilet

It is important to know that it is makruh to urinate whilst standing since our clothes can easily become najis by doing so. After urinating we should wash ourselves twice with water. After a bowel movement however we can use a cloth or paper towel provided that it is tahir. It is wajib to use three separate pieces even if the body becomes clean before that.

2.2 Daily Bath

Islam is a religion which not only tells you to keep your soul clean, but to also keep your body clean.

You should take a regular bath or shower to keep your body clean.

2.3 Washing of Face and Brushing Teeth

In the morning when you wake up, you should wash your face and brush your teeth. This makes you feel fresh as well as cleaning the dirt that forms overnight.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said,

> *"Upon you is the brushing of the teeth, for surely it purifies the mouth, and pleases Allah, and brightens the eyesight. Indeed the angels hate the odor from a mouth not cleaned after eating food."*

2.4 While Eating

Islam recommends that we wash your hands before and after eating a meal. This is very practical of course since we do not know what our hands have touched all day. Nowadays doctors recommend frequent hand-washing to prevent the spread of germs.

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2.5 Wudhu

Islam tells us to wash ourselves before praying. This washing is known as wudhu. Some of the reasons why we do wudhu are, a. It keeps us clean, b. It refreshes us and we can concentrate and think clearly. Even simple acts such as performing wudhu before sleeping are highly recommended. If this is done, the whole night is counted as if you were performing prayers.

2.6 Ghusl

Ghusl is cleaning the body with the **niyyat** of cleaning it spiritually. Sometimes ghusl becomes wajib, i.e. when you touch a dead body. This means that you have to do ghusl before you can pray salaat.

2.7 Clean Clothing

A Muslim should never dress with dirty clothes. This does not mean that you wear your best and most expensive clothes. It means that even if you have one piece of cloth to wear, you should keep it clean.

When you wear clothes, you should wear it for yourself, and not for others to look at.

2.8 Cutting Nails

You should always cut your nails because they grow very long and can get very dirty.

If you have long nails, dirt can get trapped underneath. When you eat, you will be putting that dirt in your food and swallowing it. This is very bad for your health and can lead to many illnesses.

2.9 Looking After Hair

One should always comb his hair with a proper parting. You should never leave your hair messy and unkempt.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said that if you can not look after your hair properly, you should shave it off!

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This shows the importance of caring for your hair. This does not mean that you spend all your time making sure that each hair is in place. You should make sure that your hair is **clean** and tidy.

In closing let us remember that Islam has told us to keep our bodies clean because a clean body leads to a healthy body. If we do not look after our bodies we can get all sorts of illnesses. If we keep our body clean we will also feel good. And keeping our thoughts and actions clean will make us feel all the better!

Not only should you keep yourself clean all the time, but you should also keep the things around you clean. You should clean your own room and try to wash your own dishes. If you see a mess somewhere and you know that you did not do it, you should still try and clean it up. This is important for public places like the Mosque or school. If everyone picks up a bit of garbage, or clears some mess, the place will be spotless and tidy and everyone will benefit.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

CLEANLINESS AND PURITY ARE PART OF FAITH

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2.10 Worksheet: Cleanliness

1. How are we supposed to keep our souls clean?

2. Write down three specific areas where especial attention should be given to cleanliness.

3. *"There will come a time when people will have _____ inner selves, but _____ appearances. Then they would pray like a drowning one, and Allah will _____ _____ their prayer." (Prophet's saying)*

4. Prophet Muhammad (s) has said that _____ and _____ are part of faith.

5. In Surah al-Baqarah (2:222)

   ... For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves _____and _____.

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Chapter 3: Rebelling Against and Disobeying Parents

This is one of the most common problems in today's western world, and is the cause of a lot of violence, bad behavior and vandalism amongst today's youth.

Allah tells us in Qur'an (Surah 17, ayat 23)

> ***"Thy lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to your parents."***

This shows how important it is to obey your parents and shows us that it is definitely HARAAM to disobey them.

Question: Why should we obey our parents?

Answer: Our parents nurture us with love, take care of us, provide for us and have given up so much for us. They are older than us and so they have a lot of experience. They also have our best interests at heart, so when they tell us something, they are doing so for our own good.

Allah said to one of His prophets:

> ***"I swear by My Honor that anyone who does not obey his parents, even if he comes with the deeds of the Prophets in front of Me, I will never accept him."***

If we disobey our parents, we are disobeying Allah and so we will tend not obey anyone. This means that there will be no rules for us to follow! That may sound fine but imagine how that would be. Without rules we would not know our limits.

In today's world there are many children that do what they want and become spoilt, violent, and indecent human beings.

If today's children rebel against their parents, they will not learn how to behave, and as a result will make bad parents in the future when they have children.

This shows that if we disobey our parents, we will also be ruining our own lives because we

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will bring our children up to disobey us.

Imam Ali (A) has said:

> *"Respect your father and your son will respect you."*

There are many ways to respect your parents, some of them are:

- Never raise your voice at them.
- Do not sit when they are standing.
- Do not walk in front of them unless told to do so.
- Do not speak when they are speaking.
- Never correct them in front of others.
- Do not displease them or make them angry.
- Never insult, argue or shout at them.

When you wake up in the morning the first thing you should do is say "Salamun Alaykum" to your parents. These are all simple things, but how many of us actually do them. How many of us will actually stand and say "Salamun Alaykum" when our mother or father enters the room?

If your parents ask you to do something, you should not cast a weary glance at them or raise your eyebrows with disgust if you think they said something that is not so 'cool'.

The displeasure of Allah is so great on those who displease their parents that the person who is disowned by his parents, he will never smell the fragrance of heaven. Also, if the parents are displeased with a child, and remain so overnight, and the day dawns with their displeasure, it will be as if two gates of hell have been opened for the son.

Ayatullah Khomeini (may Allah rest his soul) said that,

> *"Looking at the face of your mother or father with respect is like looking at the Kaaba, the reward is the same."*

Here is an example of how respect and kindness for one's mother can lead to great reward from Allah:

There was once a traveler who stopped over at a young man's house. Even though the traveler was a stranger the young man invited him in. The traveler and the young man started talking. Amidst their conversation the young man excused himself many times for a few moments then came back to attend his guest.

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The guest asked of his excuse for these frequent disappearances. The young man informed him that he had an old, fragile mother in the next room that needed frequent attention. The guest requested that he be allowed to visit the old woman. The young man agreed.

An old, weak, and helpless woman lay in bed. There was no sign of strength anywhere in her being. The only thing that was moving was her mouth, without any words coming out of it. The guest inquired what the old woman was trying to say. The young man said, “From my young age she has always prayed for me whenever I would do something for her, that’s what she is doing now.”
The guest asked what she would pray for. The young man replied, “She prays ‘May Allah make your abode the neighborhood of His messengers’.”

The guest beamed with a smile. “Tell her prayer has been granted. I am Prophet Moses. I inquired from Allah about my neighbor in heaven. He gave me your address. I asked him how this person gains neighborhood of the prophets. He told me to come see it for myself.”

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3.1 Worksheet: Rebelling Against and Disobeying Parents

1. Allah tells us in Qur'an (Surah 17, ayat 23)

   "Thy lord has commanded that you worship none but Him, and that you be _____ to your _____."

2. There are many ways to respect your parents, three of them are:

   a.

   b.

   c.

3. Why should we obey our parents?

4. Explain what is meant by the saying:

   "Respect your father and your son will respect you."

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Chapter 4: Honoring Guests/ Hospitality

4.1 Hospitality

Hospitality means to be polite to people when they come to your house and to treat them with respect.

How should we be polite?

There are many ways; some of them are:

a) If the guest is a Muslim, you can start by saying SALAAMUN ALAYKUM.

b) You can speak in a low voice instead of shouting.

c) You can offer the guest something to drink.

d) You can just talk with the guest and not leave him alone in a strange room.

Why should we be polite to guests?

The reason why we should be polite to guests is so that they fell happy. Allah will be pleased with us and we will get Thawaab. Our parents will also be pleased with us.

If you are polite towards guests and other people, they will come to respect you.

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4.2 Worksheet: Honoring Guests/Hospitality

For Questions 1 to 4, how should you behave when:

1. Someone comes to your house when you are tired and sleepy?

2. A friend visits you just when it is time for Maghrib?

3. It is dinnertime, and you have a guest?

4. Your cousin is spending the day with you, and he breaks one of your toys?

5. If someone did not have any hospitality, how would they behave?

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6. Why is it important to treat others and guests with respect?

7. Ali and Jaffer are visiting their friend Hussein for the afternoon to do a homework assignment. Ali and Jaffer just got back from a soccer match and are extremely thirsty and hungry. Hussein is aware that his friends just got back from practice and Hussein does not offer them anything to drink. Hussein's mom is at home but does not offer the boys any food and does not even check up on them to see how they are doing while they get situated. The boys begin studying and Hussein's mom just decides to go upstairs so that she can take care of her daily household chores. The kids feel ignored. She is not hospitable at all to the boys. They leave Hussein's home very disappointed and hungry. How would you treat Ali and Jaffer if they were visiting your house and how would you expect your mom to treat them?

8. When you are hospitable to others and offer them kindness in your home, your guests leave happy and respect you, Allah will be pleased with you and your parents will be proud of you

TRUE FALSE

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9. Your neighbor knocks at your door one morning and explains to you that their phone was temporarily disconnected and that her husband took her cell phone by mistake. She explains that she was packing his lunch and put her cellophane in his briefcase by mistake. She needs to call her husband to inform him and asks you if she could use your phone. How would you treat her?

10. Your mom is out of the house doing some errands and her friend shows up to see her. You are alone at home. How are you going to receive her in a hospitable manner

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Chapter 5: Friendship

Everyone needs friends,
but friends are only worth having if they are true friends.

Two travellers were on the road together, when a robber suddenly appeared.

One man ran for a tree and climbed up and hid in the branches. The other was not as fast so threw himself onto the ground pretending to be dead. The robber came to the man on the floor, whispered something in his ear and went away. When the robber had gone the man in the tree climbed down and asked his friend what the robber had whispered in his ear.

His friend replied that the robber had told him to find a better friend who would not leave him at the first sign of danger.

Friends influence each other in the matter of conduct, thoughts and belief.

As the Holy Prophet (s) has said:
"*The behavior of everyone depends on the belief and principles of his/her friend."*

People will judge you according to the friends you have.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (a) was walking in the market with his friend, who had brought his servant with him (at that time it was a normal practise for everyone to have household help).

Imam's friend turned to tell his servant something, but he had been left behind talking to someone.

When the servant finally appeared, Imam's friend was very angry and shouted abuse at the servant. He also said abusive things about the servant's mother.

On hearing what his friend had said Imam got very angry and told him that he should not have said such abusive things, especially about the servant's mother. The friend replied that the mother was not a Muslim. To which Imam answered that it made no difference.

Imam (a) then told his friend that their friendship was no more, and walked away from him.

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It should not be forgotten that making friends is not enough, but it is also important to keep the friendship. In the above story the man, due to his lack of respect for humanity, lost Imam's (a) friendship.

Imam Ali (a) has said:
"A man who has no friends is poor, but poorer than him, is he who can not keep the friendship and loses his friend.

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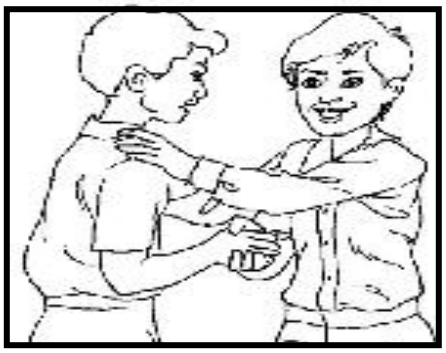
5.1 Worksheet: Friendship

Next to each picture write what you think is happening & then write down if that is a good quality in a friend and whether or not you would like your friend to have such a quality. You can color the pictures if you like.



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Chapter 6: Forgiveness

To ask for forgiveness:

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an,
"…. Do not despair of the mercy of Allah; indeed Allah forgives all sins.
Indeed He is oft-forgiving, most merciful."

In the above Ayat we are told never give up hope, as Allah will forgive us, as **He is Most Forgiving and Most Merciful.**

This does not mean that we commit a sin, ask for forgiveness then commit that same sin again and again each time asking for forgiveness and expecting to be forgiven.

Allah will forgive us but only if we are truly sorry.

Our 5th Imam, Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir (a) has said that one who leaves sinning totally and asks for forgiveness, is like one, who has not committed any sin at all. However, one who, continues to commit sins and at the same time prays for forgiveness is like one who jokes.

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Since Allah forgives us for all our mistakes if we are sincere, we should also forgive people who have mad mistakes with us..

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an,
"….If you forgive, overlook and cover up (their faults), then indeed Allah is oft-forgiving, merciful."

The above Ayat tells us that if we forgive, and not just forgive but also hide others people's faults then Allah will do the same for us and **remember Allah is the Most Forgiving.**

**To forgive someone is to let someone of the hook,
to pardon someone for their mistake towards you.**

Allah not only tells us to forgive but also overlook - let things pass: And to cover up - not to tell others what that person had done.

Our 1st Imam, Imam Ali (a) has said that at times when you can have revenge on someone, when you have the power to pay back and then you forgive that is called true forgiving.

The above Hadith tells us that it is truly forgiving when you have the means to get revenge for what that person had done and you do not use these means but instead forgive.

To forgive someone means then you forget about it, and not to remind the person of it, nor to tell anyone else of it.

Imam Ali (a) has said *"Punish your enemies with kindness and do a good deed for them in return for the harm that they have done to you.*

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6.1 Worksheet: Forgiveness

1. There are times when we really regret doing something wrong. This is how we should feel when we ask Allah for forgiveness and we can be sure Allah will forgive us if we are truly _____.

2. Someone who continues to commit sins and at the same time prays for forgiveness is like one who _____.

3. Since Allah forgives us for all our mistakes if we are sincere, we should also _____.

4. Think of a time when you got really angry at your brother/sister or friend. What did you do? Did you behave like a kind, forgiving person or like an angry unforgiving person? Write down how you could behave so that Allah would be pleased with you.

5. Complete the sentence to show what would be recommended behavior by Islam: Huma was very angry with her older brother because he had just teased her in front of her best friend. Holding back her angry tears she turned towards him and ….

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Chapter 7: Haqq-un-naas (Rights of Humanity)

The phrase Haqq-un-naas comprises two words, *(Haq)* which mean right, i.e. a person's right to have or own something, and *(naas)* which means person, or human beings.

Haqq-un-naas therefore means the rights of people. Every person has certain rights that should not be taken away. If I am holding the estate of an orphan, then it is the right of the orphan to inherit the estate when he is old enough. I should not take advantage of my position and consume it for my self.

The reward offered for service to humanity is so great, that few other deeds carry similar rewards. The Holy Prophet (s) has said:

> *"One who fulfils the needs of a brother Muslim is like one who has been worshipping Allah throughout his life".*

Allah who is Just and Merciful, will (Inshallah) forgive us for the sins that we commit against Him, provided we repent for them sincerely; but He will not forgive us for the sins we commit against others. That would be going against His justice. We can never be forgiven for breaking Haqq-un-naas, the rights of others, unless the person whom we have wronged forgives us himself. This makes Haqq-un-naas a major sin, and one which is unforgivable.

The next question is *"What actions break Haqq-un-naas?"*

Anything that could be labeled as inconsiderate would break Haqq-un-naas. Islam is a religion for a community, where people can interact and the whole society can come together under one faith and guard each others' rights. The spirit of **consideration** is the central force that binds people together in a society. Human life without consideration is transformed into animal life, where every one is for himself. So Islam strongly encourages us to recognize the rights of humanity *and* practice them.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

> *"Prefer for people that which you prefer for yourself."*

A person has a right over you even when he is not there. Imagine you were at a gathering, talking to others. If I am not at that gathering, I still have a right that my name should not be insulted, nor my reputation tainted. But if you mention my name in any such way, then you have committed a sin against me. Such a sin cannot be forgiven unless I have forgiven it.

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Due to these high consequences we should avoid committing actions which breach the rights of others. You are answerable for Haqq-un-naas even after death. Islam advises that we should seek forgiveness from the person whom we have wronged before one of the parties dies. If person dies before forgiving the other, then there is no direct way of obtaining forgiveness, and that sin will carry forward until the day of Judgement.

Consider the danger of this sin! Allah, who can create the universe and destroy it in one stroke, who can perform any action conceivable, who is eternal and lives forever, even He cannot forgive us for crimes against Haqq-un-naas. He Himself has told us that only the person who has been wronged can forgive us. This does not matter whether the person is a Muslim, or a non Muslim, whether he is a sinner, or a believer.

Islam is a religion that not only benefits a person directly, but helps the community in general. Where else can you find a law the commands you not to insult others, and to guard their reputation in public and private?

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7.1 Worksheet: Haqq-un-naas

Fill in the blanks:

1. The word 'Haqq-un-naas' means the _____ of people.

2. The reward offered for _____ ____ _____ is so great, that few other deeds carry similar rewards.

3. Allah, may forgive us for the sins that we commit against Him; but He will not forgive us for the sins we commit against _____.

4. Haqq-un-naas is a _____ sin, that is, one which is unforgivable.

5. Anything that could be labeled as _____ would break Haqq-un-naas.

True/False

1. Only the person who has been wronged can forgive you for your crimes against Haqq-un-naas.

2. Talking negatively about someone against their back can be considered as breaking Haqq-un-naas.

3. Cheating someone can be considered as breaking Haqq-un-naas.

4. Not praying can be considered as breaking Haqq-un-naas.

5. If you do something inconsiderate against a non- Muslim, you don't need to ask for his forgiveness.

Extra Credit:

Write down five different ways you could fulfill 'Haqq-un-naas,' that is five ways you could be considerate to others.

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Chapter 8: Rights of Muslims

Islamic culture tells us how we should behave. It is the way Muslims are taught to live and is based on the two sources of Qur'an and Hadith. A Muslim should understand and practise this knowledge, since when these two sources are combined; we have the way and means to lead a life which will lead to perfection and contentment.

From Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (a) it is reported that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: incumbent upon the Muslim are thirty obligations toward his Muslim brother, from which there is no release for him, unless he either discharges them or is excused (by his Muslim brother) from fulfilling them. These obligations are:

1. To forgive his error
2. To be compassionate about (and relieve) his sadness or tears
3. To guard his secret
4. To disregard his stumbling (offense)
5. To accept his apology
6. To reject backbiting of him
7. To persist in rendering advice to him
8. To treasure his friendship
9. To guard his trust
10. To visit him when he is ill
11. To be with him at the time of his death
12. To embrace his invitation
13. To accept his gift
14. To reciprocate his favor
15. To thank him for his grace
16. To be grateful for his assistance
17. To guard his honor
18. To provide for his needs
19. To facilitate the resolution of his problem
20. To say to him "may Allah bless you" when he sneezes
21. To guide him to what he cherishes
22. To reply to his greetings
23. To take him at his word (not interpret negatively what he says)
24. To accept his bestowals
25. To attest to his honesty if he swears to something
26. To be kind and friendly towards him
27. To not betray or forsake him
28. To wish his brother in Islam whatever good things he desires for himself

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29. To loathe for his Muslim brother whatever he hates for himself
30. To help him whether he is unjust or is a victim of injustice—as to assisting him when he is unjust, it means he must be prevented from continuing his wrong act, and when he is a victim of injustice he should be assisted in restoring his rights.

There are countless examples of what we should do, and how we should act, but the essence of all these actions is having good Akhlaq.

To have good Akhlaq, you have to follow a very simple rule. Prophet Isa (A), Imam Ali (A), and Prophet Muhammad (S) have all emphasized one message and that is:

Treat others the way you would like them to treat you.

This just means to have **especial** CONSIDERATION for our fellow Muslims. It is almost the same as the rights of humanity over us. Only our Muslim brothers and sisters have the right to be treated by us with even more care and understanding.

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8.1 Worksheet: Rights of Muslims

Fill in the blanks:

1. Imam _____ (a) reported that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: incumbent upon the Muslim are _____obligations toward his Muslim brother.
2. He also said you have to fulfill these duties unless your Muslim brother _____ you.
3. One of the duties are, to take him at his word (not interpret _____ what he says).
4. Another of the duties are, to wish his brother in Islam whatever good things he _____ _____ _____.
5. To forgive his/her _____ is also an obligation we have toward our Muslim brother/sister.
6. Another obligation towards our fellow Muslim is to treasure his/her _____.
7. If I hate being teased and I pray that my Muslim friend and I don't get teased, I am fulfilling obligation number _____ in the list above.
8. According to one of the obligations above if my friend helps clean up after a party in my house I should probably _____.

Short answers:

1. Imagine that you were angry at your Muslim friend for something. Write down what it could be and what you could do about it to fulfill your obligation towards him/her?

2. In your own words explain what the last (30th) obligation in the list above means?

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Chapter 9: Islamic Community and Brotherhood

Islam is not just a religion; it is the way to lead a perfect and fulfilling life. The social (community) life of Islam is described below, followed by the codes of conduct by which Muslims are bound.

The word community is defined as *"a body of people forming social unity....having race, religion etc.. in common."*

Islam is a religion which is sent as a gift from Allah to mankind, to bring them together in peace and harmony. This cannot be done unless the whole community is at peace, and this in turn depends on each individual being at peace.

If you think of a community as a football team, for the team to be successful, it has to co-operate, each person must be playing well if the whole team is to play well.

The way Islam has ensured a happy community life is by laying down social codes (the way to act) which become part of the individual's character and so affect the whole community.

The community is also a test for mankind, because he is subjected to temptation at every stage, as explained below:

There was once a man who went to a cave far away from everyone. He used to stay there, pray, and fast. One day a passer by saw him, and asked him, "Why are you living here, in the middle of nowhere?"

The man replied, "Over here, I find it easier not to commit sins, and so please Allah. I have not done Gheebat (backbiting), Fitnah, nor Fasaad (slandering). I have not become angry, and I have not insulted my neighbor. I have been very pious."

The first man laughed and said: "You are only fooling yourself. The only reason that you have remained so noble is that there is NO ONE here for you to abuse. To live with people is a test as to how you can control yourself with them. It is a test to see whether you can forgive someone who is bad to you, whether you can refrain from backbiting, or teasing. All you are doing is running away, and missing the test."

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The above example is like missing school during exam days, and then telling your parents "I didn't fail even one exam."

The heart of the community is the faith which binds it together and educates it to worship (praise) Allah. This is emphasized is many areas such as congregational (Jamaat) prayers, majalis, and other gatherings. Allah instructs us in Qur'an (Surah 21, Ayat 92):

> ***"Verily this Brotherhood of yours is a single Brotherhood, and I Am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore serve Me (and no other)."***

The strength of the community is based on its unity. There is a saying in English, "Divide and conquer", which means that if you want to rule over a group of people, you first divide them, and make them quarrel within themselves. This is what the western world is doing to the world-wide community of Islam. We should learn from this, and always stand up for our rights.

We are allowed to compromise, but only as much as the Shari'a will allow. We can never compromise our principles or our faith. For this we should look at the lesson taught to us by Imam Hussein (a) on the plains of Kerbala.

As well as the community being a test, it is jointly a reward, because a person can surround himself with true friends who are there to help when in need. Allah announces in Qur'an (Surah 49, Ayat 13)

> ***"O mankind! We have created you from a single (pair).. and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (Not that you may despise each other). The most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you."***

The way in which a community should live is described by Islamic values, known as the Islamic Code of Social Life, and is now explained.

9.1 Islamic Code of Social Life

Islamic social codes are the ideals by which Muslims should try to live within a community.

Each of us has a responsibility to the other, to maintain justice, to respect the rights of the other.

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In Qur'an (Surah 49, Ayats 11,12) Allah explains to us certain ways of behaving:

> ***"O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other by (offensive) nicknames...***
>
> ***Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs (Gheebat). Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother ?"***

There are an infinite ways to behave in a community; the essence of all the social codes is again consideration. If one considers the needs of his brother, then he will act accordingly.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said:

> *"Prefer for people that which you prefer for yourself."*

In a very short Surah (Asr) Allah explains the social code for the whole of mankind, Ayat 2:

> ***"Verily Man is in a loss."***

This is thought to refer to the Day of Judgement when Allah will raise man from his grave to answer about his life, some men will say that they had not done any good deeds, and these men will be in a loss. Some men will reply that they had been very good themselves and established regular prayers, THESE MEN TOO WILL BE IN A LOSS.

Ayat 3:

> ***"Except for such as have Faith, AND do righteous deeds, AND join together in the mutual teaching of Truth, AND of patience."***

This shows that being good yourself is not enough; you must also serve the community by guiding them towards the truth and enjoining them towards good.

So, another important code of social life is to do **Amr bil Ma'aroof** (enjoin towards good) and **Nahy anil Munkar** (forbid from evil).

Islam is the only religion that can claim to have developed a science in human behavior, in manners and in the art of perfecting the soul. Apart from being a Muslim, one who follows the teaching of the 12 Imams (A), and believes in the justice of God is called a Mu'min (a believer).

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Once Imam Ali (A) was asked, “Who is a believer?” He answered as to what the characteristics of a believer should include,

"The believer is one with whom peoples' life, wealth, and dignity are safe.

When powerful, he forgives easily. He is generous in appropriate ways.

His behavior is gentle. His actions and walk reflect modesty.

People enjoy his affection and calmness. He is ready to bear pain in order to comfort others.

In friendship he is sincere. He honors his promises.

He helps the oppressed and is concerned about the deprived. He does not abandon those in distress; he tries to relieve their burdens.

He respects the rights of those who are absent. He accepts the apologies of those at fault.

He assists those who have assisted him.

He does not divulge (tell) peoples' secrets. He does not inquire into secret affairs which do not concern him.

He sets a good example for those who succeed him.

His good deeds are not performed for the sake of being boastful.

He does not fall into the same difficulty twice."

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9.2 Worksheet: Islamic Community and Brotherhood

1. When we translate the word “Islam” it means peace. Islam is a religion of peace and harmony. Peaceful co-existence is only possible when we all are at peace with one another and to ensure this happens we must all do our part to find peace within ourselves and treat others the way we would like to be treated, with respect, dignity, and understanding. If we are good to others and at peace with ourselves others will be at peace as well
   TRUE FALSE

2. Allah tests us in various ways. One of the ways in which he tests us is by seeing how well we can co-exist peacefully and in harmony living in a community. Habeeb just inherited a huge amount of money from his aunty who passed away. Habeeb now feels that he does not need to work and can retire comfortably. He decides to leave all his worldly duties and decides to move far away into a farmhouse where he will have no contact with the outside world and will be able to pray and give thanks to Allah and refrain from committing sin. He wants to retreat back into “nature”. He knows that if he has minimal contact with the outside world he will refrain from doing gheebat, fitnah, fasaad, and hurting others. He will also be able to pray regularly. Do you think this will make Habeeb a better Muslim? Does Islam encourage us to isolate ourselves from others? If your answer is no then explain why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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3. Islam is a religion that emphasizes the importance of community, brotherhood and unity. Find an Ayat from the Qur'an from your notes in which Allah refers to Muslims as one "brotherhood" and write it down below mentioning the Surah that it has been taken from and the Ayat number

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Islam asks us to embrace all cultures and races. Allah made us all unique. Muslims all over the world come from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds and races yet we all are one and equal in the eyes of Allah. We were made different so that we could find something interesting in each other and get to know each other and be able to identify each other. Write an Ayat down from your notes that talks about this and mention the Surah that it is taken from below

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

.

5. Islamic Social Codes are the ideals by which Muslims should try to live within a community. Which one of the statements below is **not** mentioned in Surah 42, Ayats 11 and 12 of the Qur'an

a) Not to make fun of others
b) Not to judge others and think that you are better than them
c) Not to make fun of others by calling them names
d) Gheebat is equivalent to eating the flesh of ones "dead brother"
e) To fast in Ramadan

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6. Apart from being a Muslim, one who follows the teaching of the 12 Imams (A), and believes in the justice of God is called a Mu'min (a believer).

TRUE FALSE

7. What is Amr bil maroof? Give one example of how you can do Amr bil maroof below

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Nahy anil Munkar means

a) do good deeds
b) avoid and refrain from evil
c) support world leaders who oppress and victimize others
d) fasting

9. Which one of the following statements is not true? According to Imam Ali (a), a believer is one who

a) One with whom peoples' life, wealth, and dignity are safe.
b) One who is a sincere friend
c) One who keeps his promises
d) One who abandons a friend in time of need

10. According to Imam Ali (a), a believer is one who learns from his mistakes and Experiences and does not fall into the same “difficulty” twice

TRUE FALSE

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SECTION I: Akhlaq (for History Class)

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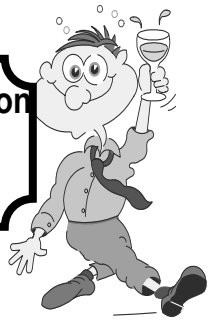
Chapter 10: Honesty / Lying:

A perfect example of honesty is our Holy Prophet Muhammad (s), who was known as the truthful one even by his enemies.

Honesty means truthfulness - in your words and action

Lying is the opposite of honesty.



The Holy Qur'an tells us not to lie:

> ***(2:42) "And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when you know (what it is)."***

Allah says we should never lie. It is Haraam, whether it is a big or a small lie, whether it is done in seriousness or jokingly. It is Haraam! It is haraam because you are deceiving others. Why do people lie?

There are many reasons why, some of them are:

a. as an excuse to get yourself out of trouble,
b. to cheat somebody out of something you want,
c. to get someone else into trouble.

As you can see, all the above reasons are bad. If you have done something which gets you into trouble, then you should face it, and not lie your way out of it because that is being very irresponsible. If you make the habit of lying, then you will lie very often without realizing it since one lie usually leads to another, as you try to cover the lie you told before.

You will lie to your family, your friends and everybody you meet. Then one day you will be caught because you will have trapped yourself in a corner, and there will be no escape. So, it is better to tell the truth at the beginning. Otherwise you will soon get into the habit of lying without even thinking about it.

Allah knows everything, so although you may think you have got away with telling a lie and no-one knows, remember Allah knows and He is who you have to answer to. So, it is better to tell the truth and be punished if you have done something wrong; than to lie and be punished by Allah in the hereafter.

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We all know that lying is a great sin. The bad thing is that we do not realize how often we are doing it. Our Sixth Imam said that it is more difficult to repent for many small sins than for one big sin.

Prophet Muhammad (S) has said,

> *"Beware of association with the liar for he is like a mirage which draws the far one nearer to you and the nearer far from you."*
>
> *"Leave falsehood and make speaking the truth a habit."*
>
> *"If a person has a habit of speaking lies, he is a hypocrite until he rids himself of the habit."*

Once a man came to the Holy Prophet (s) and told him that he was committing many sins like drinking, gambling, stealing...And now he had decided to became a Muslim but he could only give up one of the sins at a time.

The Holy Prophet told him to give up lying. The man agreed, thinking he had got off lightly.

Now the next day, when the man went to steal something, he stopped and thought. If he got caught, he would not be able to say he did not do it because he could not lie.

And even if he did not get caught, how would he be able to face the Holy Prophet (s) and tell him all the wrong he had done. It would be so embarrassing.

So by giving up lying the man slowly gave up his other sins.

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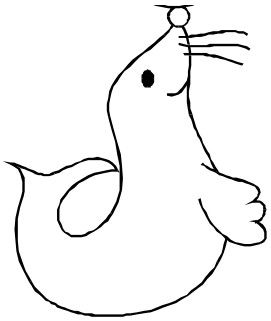
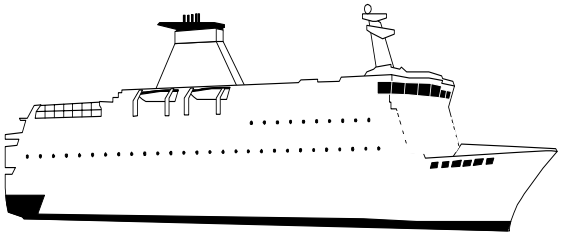
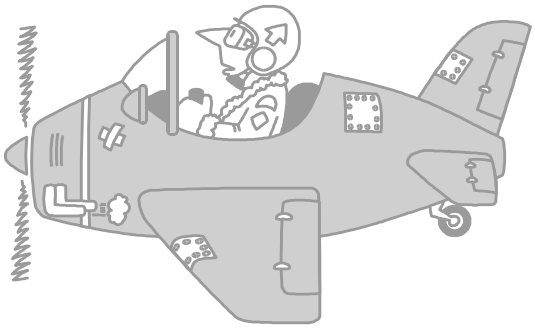
10.1 Worksheet: Honesty? Lying

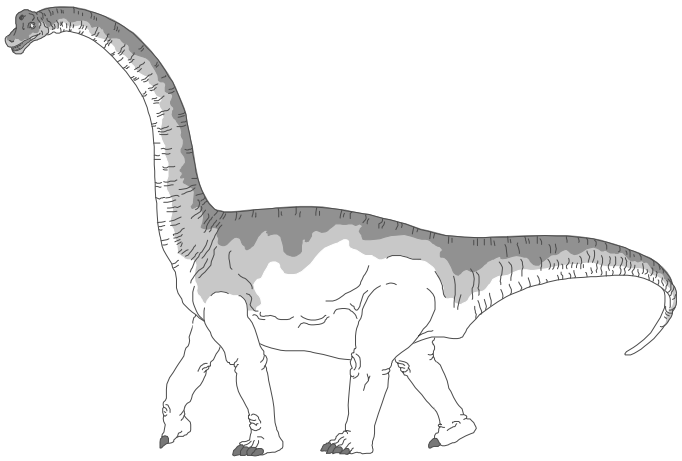
1. One of the titles of our Holy Prophet Muhammad (s) was the truthful one, as you were told in the notes. If you take the first letter of each of the pictures below, you will know how to say this title in Arabic.

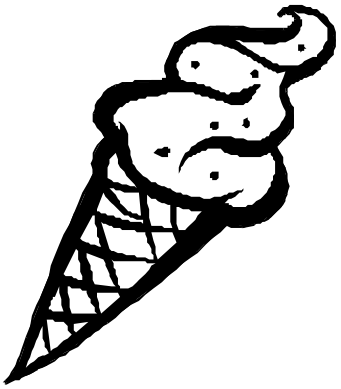
   THE TRUTHFUL ONE - ___ ___ - ___ ___ ___ ___ ___











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2. Think of a time when you wanted to lie. Did you stop yourself or did you lie? If you lied what you think would have happened if you had not lied? How do you think you would stop yourself next time? Write all these details down. You will not have to share them with anyone in the class. As far as your teacher is concerned s/he will be proud that you were able to talk about your mistake because the first step to correcting a mistake is acknowledging it.

3. How do you think lying can lead to further evils?

4. Many people lie when they are afraid they'll get in trouble. The more responsible thing to do to tell the truth and face the consequence.

   a. True b. False

5. IF you feel your lie will never get caught it would be alright to lie.

   a. True b. False

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Chapter 11: Trustworthiness

Every human being possesses secrets. We would rather not disclose our secrets to others, due to embarrassment, shame, guilt or such reasons.

When someone tells you a secret, they are entrusting you with something very important, and we do not realize this sometimes.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that:

> *"He who keeps no pledge has no religion".*

In the Holy Qur'an Surah 8 ayat 27 Allah says:

> ***"O ye that believe! betray not the trust of God and the apostle, nor exploit knowingly things entrusted to you"***

Let say if someone was to hand over some money to you, and say "Please look after this, don't give it to anybody."

Now, if you agreed, and then were to go and give that money to someone else, you would be breaking your word, even if you were to get the money back.

It is the same with a secret, it is something entrusted to you, (AMANAT), and you do not have any right to disclose it to anyone else.

The Holy Prophet (S) has said that:

> *"Four things when allowed to enter a house become the cause of spoiling and depriving it of prosperity,"*

of those four things, one of them is *the breach of trust.*

He also said:

> *"A hypocrite is recognized by three signs:*
> 1. *He lies when he talks*
> 2. *He breaks promises*
> 3. *He betrays when he is trusted*

It is not a sin to tell the other person's secret, as long as you do not give his identity, and that you SINCERELY feel that by telling someone else, you may be able to help this other person.

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11.1 Worksheet: Trustworthiness

1. Give an example from home, school or otherwise where you showed your trustworthiness.

2. What are the signs of a hypocrite?

3. What did Allah say about trust in the Holy Qur'an, Surah 8 ayat 27?

4. If your best friend wants you to tell them some other friend's secret how would you respond?

5. What did the Holy Prophet (S) say about trust?

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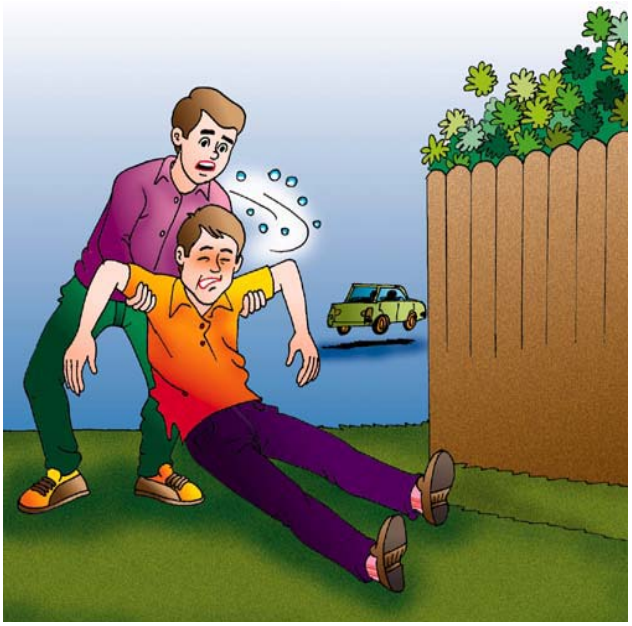
Chapter 12: Charity

Charity means to care about others and to give assistance to those in need.

A NEEDY person is one who NEEDS help, who may be weak, ill, poor, or in need of some kind of service.



Allah has said in the Qur'an that anyone who has any money should give some to the needy. When a person donates anything, time or money, he feels as if he has lost it. However, Allah promises in Qur'an Surah 2 ayat 261:

> ***"The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears with a hundred grain in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample giving, Knowing."***

This means that Allah will increase your sustenance when you give to others from your earnings.

Allah spoke these words to Prophet Musa (A) in Hadith e Qudsi,

> ***"Oh Musa, when you deal well with My creation (people), I am so pleased, it is as if you have dealt well with Me."***

This shows that besides fulfilling an obligation by being charitable, you are also gaining the pleasure of Allah.

When we help those people who are not as well of as we are, then we should also thank Allah that we are blessed with so much.

Since Allah always helps us and has given us so much, we should use some of it to help

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others. This means that we are using our wealth properly, the way we are meant to, rather than just spending it on luxuries and useful things.

We don't have to be rich and powerful to help others. If we have some spare time, we can go to the hospital to visit some of the elderly or ill people there. All we have to do is chat with them so that they do not feel lonely, or cheer them up. We can offer to help elderly people around our area, and do their shopping for them, or help them in their garden. We can offer to help a new immigrant in learning English. We can offer to help a blind person cross a street. We should **ALWAYS try to help** those people who are not as fortunate as ourselves in whatever way we can, and **NEVER EVER** tease them.

If we do this, we are being considerate, if not than we are being very unkind and thoughtless.

The secret of being considerate is to pretend you were the other person, and try to see how life would be through his/her eyes.

At the end of the day, it is not good enough to just think about the under-privileged, we should DO something to help them. If we help others, then on the Day of Judgment, Allah will help us.

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12.1 Worksheet: Charity

1. What does charity mean?

2. Give an example of charity from everyday life.

3. What did Allah say to Prophet Musa (A) in Hadith e Qudsi?

4. Since charity means helping, how could you help your Sunday school as a student of grade 4?

5. How could you help our Sunday school if you were grown up and a volunteer, not a 4th grade student?

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Chapter 13: Acquiring Knowledge

This means to try and LEARN and UNDERSTAND what people say to you and use it in the future.

You don't have to wait to be told something to learn. You can always gain knowledge by watching what other people do, and learning from their mistakes, and picking up their good habits. You can also learn by picking up good points from books which you read, and from the television you watch. Always be careful that you notice bad habits and avoid picking up these.

If someone says something to you, you should do three things

1. **Listen**
2. **Learn**
3. **Understand**

Then you can use what you have learnt for your own benefit, and maybe even teach it to others. The important thing about knowledge is that you should never become proud of it. **No matter how much you know, there is always many times more that you do not know.**

There was a king a long time ago, who was very famous. One reason for his fame was the wisdom of his counselor. Once the counselor was walking down the road and was stopped by an old lady, who said "I have a question for you."

The wise old man said "How can I help you?"

The old lady asked her question and the wise old man sat down and started to think. He scratched his head and moved one way and then another. Finally he said,

"I don't know the answer."

The old lady said, "Huh, you are supposed to be the King's wise man, and you can not even answer an old woman's question!"

The wise old man laughed and replied, "The king pays me for the answers that I **DO** know, if he was to pay me for the answers that I **DO NOT** know, all the kingdoms on the earth would not suffice."

This shows us that no matter how clever a person is, there is always room for him to improve.

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The places where we learn are at home, school, the mosque, and Madressa. We should learn something new wherever we go. We should always respect the places which are especially for knowledge by acting properly and trying not only to learn, but to enjoy learning. For example, at school we should respect our teacher, and at the same time try and enjoy doing the work. That way we will progress and have fun at the same time.

In the time of the Prophet (S), the Mosque in Medina was not only used as a place of worship, but the believers assembled there to learn. When the Prophet (S) was present, they heard his words of wisdom and benefited by his teachings. When he was not there, other faithful companions taught what they had heard from the Prophet of Allah.

Once, the Prophet (S) entered a mosque, **before** the time for prayer**.** He found two groups in the mosque. In one group, some were reading from the Qur'an while others were praying. The other group was in a corner busy learning. They learnt how to read and write and discussed the teachings of Islam and their application to their daily lives.

Looking at both, the Prophet (S) said: "They are both engaged in useful pursuits. But I am a teacher. I shall join the group assembled to learn." And so he sat with the group of students.

The above incident does not mean that prayer is not important, as the Holy Prophet (s) was pleased with both groups. The group that was praying was doing Sunnah prayers not Wajib.

For any community to survive and go forward in this world, the people of that community have to have knowledge.

To gain knowledge is not only to learn like a parrot,
but to understand and act upon what you have learnt.
Then to teach it to others, so they may benefit from it as well.

The Holy Prophet (s) has said that every Muslim man and woman must gain knowledge.

The knowledge that we have to gain should be religious and academic. It is possible to do both, as Allah has made us He knows what we are capable of.

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If your knowledge in religion increases you will become closer to Allah because you will understand a lot more of what you are doing and why.

We are told that if two people are offering the same prayer, one with understanding and the other without; then the one with understanding will get more Thawaab.

On the day of Qiyamat if you are questioned about something wrong that you had done in your life, you will not be able to say you did not know! You will have no excuse. There are so many books you can read, and so many people you can ask, so it is wajib for you to seek knowledge and to be informed.

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13.1 Worksheet: Acquiring Knowledge

Short answer questions:

1. What does acquiring knowledge mean?

2. Write in order the 3 things you should do when someone says something to you.

3. Name some of the places where you can acquire knowledge? Give examples.

4. Why is it that a person should never feel proud when they learn and acquire knowledge about religion or academics?

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5. What happens when our knowledge in religion increases?

Tell whether true or false:

6. For a community to survive and go forward in this world, the people of that community have to acquire knowledge.
   O true
   O false

7. On the day of Qiyamat ignorance or lack of knowledge will not excuse our wrong deed.
   O true
   O false

8. The Holy Prophet (s) has said that every Muslim man and woman must gain knowledge.
   O true
   O false

9. To gain knowledge is not only to memorize the facts but also to understand and act upon what has been learnt.
   O true
   O false

10. There is a difference between a Muslim and a mu'min.
    O true
    O false

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Chapter 14: Laziness

Laziness means avoiding work or putting in the least amount of effort to get something done.

Laziness is a very bad habit, because you waste time, and time is the most valuable thing you have.

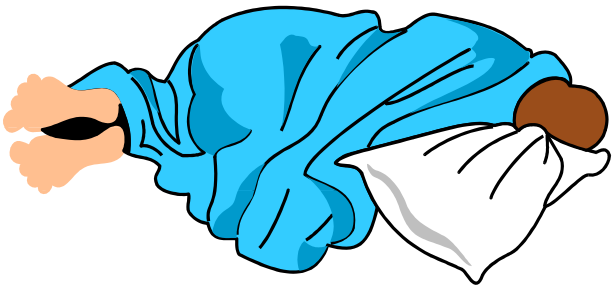
Allah has given you a certain amount of time to live on this earth, and if you waste it, you are showing that you are ungrateful.

An idle person is Shaytan's best friend. Idleness means doing nothing, and when you are doing nothing, just killing time, then Shaytan starts putting thoughts into your mind, and tells you to do things which you would otherwise avoid.

If you are tired, and are relaxing, that is not being lazy, that is alright. However, if you are sitting around all day, with nothing to do, just watching television or sleeping late for no reason, then that is laziness.

You should never say that I am bored! What is your imagination for? Use it to find something to do. If you have finished doing all your work, then pick up a book and read. You don't have to read only for school, you can find good story books which take you into a different world and further enhance your imagination.

You can find an interest or a hobby to keep you occupied. You can read the Qur'an or try and learn something new and exciting. If you start thinking of ideas for things to do the possibilities are endless. So next time before declaring you are bored think twice!!



A Muslim can never really get bored
because he has been told to never be lazy, since he has to work for two lives. Most people do their work and then take it easy. A Muslim, however, has to work for both this life and the next life, because he knows that there is going to be a life after we die. Prophet Muhammad (s) said:

"*Ad-Dunya Mazriat-ul Akhira*". This means, *this world is the bridge (preparation for, preface to) to the hereafter*.

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We as Muslims believe this whole world is created as an exam for mankind and as we go about our daily lives, we are facing this exam. Our suffering here and our actions in this world will determine the real reward or punishment in the hereafter.

A hadith from Imam Ali (a) says:

"Al-Yaum yaumo Amal wa la Hisab waghdan yaumo Hisab wa la Amal" which means, *this world is the day of working and action and not accounting, and the hereafter is the Day of accounting and not the day of work or action.*

We should therefore work for the next life while we have the time, to make sure that we will benefit on the Day of Judgement.

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14.1 Worksheet: Laziness

1. Why is laziness considered bad in Islam?

2. What did Imam say about hard work?

3. Do you think relaxing when you are tired is the same as being lazy? Why or why not?

4. What can you do instead of being lazy?

5. What can you do to stop your *laziness* or what kind of hard work do you do instead of being lazy?

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Chapter 15: Some of the Major Sins (gunah-e-Kabira)

> ***"And if anyone earns sin, he earns it against his own soul: for God is full of knowledge and wisdom." (Holy Qur'an 4:111)***

Islamic Laws help us protect ourselves from dangerous or harmful effects. The harm doesn't have to be to you alone, it could also be to those around you. If we deliberately reject the rules of Islam, we commit a sin, and we actually are harming ourselves in one way or another. Some of the sins we commit are between us and Allah (swt) and some are between us and others. Many of these are known as the major sins or gunah-e- kabira. Major sins have a very bad effect for a long time spiritually and bodily for the community, the society, and the self. For example killing, drinking alcohol, stealing and not praying with intention and without excuse. Gunah-e- saghira (minor sins) have a minor effect on our self, our society and spiritually, for example, if you speak about someone without the intention of gossiping or hurting that person, or if you miss your prayers because you accidentally forgot or overslept.

In this chapter we will focus on three ***major*** sins that are often overlooked in our society:

1. Lying
2. Backbiting
3. Persisting in small sins

We have already studied the effects of lying. We should also be aware that in Islam lying is considered to be a major sin, not just a small sin.

> ***"And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when you know (what it is)." (Holy Qur'an; 2:42)***

Backbiting is another one of the major sins in Islam. Backbiting means to talk about a person, and say things about him when he is not there, in such a way as to displease him. The Holy Prophet (S) once said,

> *…the backbiter can not be pardoned unless he has been pardoned by the one about whom he has been backbiting."*

Lastly we should realize that persisting in small sins is also a habit that is considered to be a major sin. If we do small sins we should not think it is alright to continue doing them just because they are small.

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Our 1st Imam, Imam Ali (a) has said that the biggest sin that a person does is the one that he considers the smallest. He also said:

"Do not assume that the sin is small because you are committing the sin against Almighty Allah (swt)".

In later classes we will learn about other sins that are considered to be major, but for now we should start to focus on these three. Many of us know that these three are very common and it is very easy to fall into the habit of committing them. So next time you are about to do any of these remind yourself that not only will you be committing a sin but a ***major*** one.

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15.1 Worksheet: Some of the Major Sins

1. Who are we actually harming when we commit a sin?

2. What does gunah-e-kabira mean?

3. Name three major sins.

4. Which major sin do you think is most common?

5. How do you think you can stop yourself from committing a sin?

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Chapter 16: Meaning of Dua' and How to Do Dua'

The meaning of dua' is calling upon and connecting with Allah Subhanahu Tala'.
Dua' is a prayer, a supplication.

A frequently repeated notion is that dua's are only for mullahs, or for the old people who want thawaab or have nothing better to do. This is limited thinking, and is at the very least untrue.

According to our Imams, human beings are dependent on Allah's mercy - from coming into existence and living in this world to the hereafter. Allah is the only one that knows all their needs and the only one who can fulfill each of them.
Therefore, it only makes sense to turn to Allah for all our needs and desires.
Dua' is when we ask Allah for something. If we realize that Allah created us, and that we are His creatures, then we have a right to ask him for our needs. Allah wants to give us so many things, He wants to help us, and to make us benefit; but He also wants us to realize that He is there, so we must ask from Him.

We must not wait until we need something before we ask. We should make a habit of talking to Allah every single day. Thanking him for what we have, asking his protection against performance of wrong, asking for help to make the day successful and happy.

If we do this we will notice that we feel good inside and that things suddenly look brighter. We will also find ourselves thinking more of Allah. Allah wants us to call Him, to ask Him when we are in need. If we remember Allah, then He will also remember us.

> ***Say: "Call upon God, or call upon Rahman: by whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): for to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names." (Holy Qur'an; 17:110)***

> ***Then you do remember Me; I will remember you. (Holy Qur'an; 2:152)***

There are times when it is recommended that we pay special attention to dua', during our Salaat and wudhu; when entering and exiting a mosque; before going to sleep; when we wake up; before and after meals; and in all happy and sad events of our lives.

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Dua' basically is conveying your heart's desire and needs to the Almighty. It can be done loudly or in ones heart.

It is not necessary to do dua' in Arabic. We can ask Allah to listen to our prayers in any language, form or action.
Lots of dua's have been narrated by our Imams. They have taught us the best way to ask Allah in several of the famous dua's such as Dua' of Kumayl (taught by Imam Ali (A) to his companion Kumayl). Dua's like these guide us in how to address Allah when asking Him for things in this world and the hereafter. It is recommended for us to read Dua' of Kumayl on the eve of Friday. In Dua' e Kumayl, we ask Allah, and we are told that Allah has promised to answer us.

> *For You have decreed Your worship for your creatures, You commanded them to pray to You and You have assured them that they would be answered.*

Imam Ali-Zainul Abideen (A) has given us a collection of dua's too, known as Sahifa e Kamila. This contains many dua's for all occasions. It is one of the treasures left behind by the Ahlul bait (A). The fourth Imam has also given us short dua's to be recited on each day of the week.

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16.1 Worksheet: Meaning of Dua' and How to Do Dua'

1. How would you define dua' if someone asked you what it meant?

2. Give three occasions when dua' is highly recommended?

3. How do you think we should address Allah when doing dua'?

4. What is the name of the famous dua' Imam Ali (a.s) gave to his companion?

5. What is the name of the collection of dua's by Imam Zainul Abideen (a.s)

Extra Credit

Look up any dua' with meaning, narrated by one of our Imams and write down how the Imam has addressed Allah and how He has referred to himself. Write down the name of the dua' you chose and where you got it from.

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Chapter 17: Istighfar and Tawbah (Repentance)

The Messenger of Allah [s] says:

"*A repentant person is like one who has no sin*."

Allah, the Most High, sent us prophets in order to clarify the right path and explain what is lawful (halaal), what is permitted for us to do, and what is forbidden (haraam) and harmful. He instructed us on what is obligatory (wajib) for us to perform such as prayer, fasting, helping the poor, respecting Prophet Muhammad [s] and the Ahlul-Bait (s) and so on. He also told us the things to avoid, some of which are lying, murdering, gambling, stealing, being deceitful, and being undutiful towards parents.

Some people deliberately disobey Allah and His orders that are beneficial for mankind and the welfare of society. They steal another's property or oppress people or behave badly towards their parents, or give up their obligatory duties, like saying salaat and paying zakaat for the needy.

For whoever ignores a wajib duty or commits a forbidden act, it is obligatory for him to take responsibility for his action, to repent, and ask forgiveness from Allah. If someone oppresses people or takes their property unlawfully, then to please Allah, that person should apologize to the oppressed people and return their rights.

Allah can punish the disobedient but He gives them opportunities to repent so they can reform themselves and their society and walk on the right path. He accepts their istighfar/repentance and forgives them if they sincerely regret their evil deeds and want to make righteous people out of themselves again.

> ***"…do not despair of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah forgives of the faults altogether; surely He is the Forgiving, the Merciful"*** **(Holy Qur'an; 39: 53)**

The Messenger Muhammad [s] says: *Surely, Allah is Oft-Pardoning and Most-Merciful, Who forgives His servants' sins if they ask forgiveness and give them up, as if they had not committed any sin.*

Repentance or Istighfar/tawbah is giving up disobedience **without repeating** it again and as such it cleanses the self from sin as water cleanses clothes from dirt.

(Adapted from *Characteristics of a good Muslim*, al-islam.org/KidsKorner)

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17.1 Worksheet: Istighfar and Tawbah

1. Disobedience is to commit _____ acts and give up_____ ones.
2. _____ is to give up disobedience and refrain from _____ it.
3. Allah is Most-Merciful with His servants. He accepts their repentance and _____them if they regret their _____.
4. It is obligatory for a man to ask Allah for _____ and to do the _____ acts and give up the forbidden ones, and to regret his _____deeds.
5. To repent for my sin I would have to possess the desire to become a _____ person.
6. Write down the 4 things you should do when doing tawbah.

Food for thought:

All of us have certain things we can improve about ourselves. Think about a sin or wrong habit of yours. How do you think you can repent for it and refrain from it in the future?

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Chapter 18: Gratitude to Allah (Shukr)

Shukr is the Arabic word for being thankful. When we do shukr it means that we are giving thanks to Allah, for the favors and blessing that he has bestowed upon us. Not understanding that Allah has provided us with everything we have is the same as being like the boy in the upcoming story…

A young boy was sitting at home on his birthday. Suddenly the door bell rang, and the boy rushed to see who it was.

When he opened the door, he saw the postman with a **HUGE** parcel. The postman gave the parcel to the boy and went away to deliver the rest of his mail. The boy rushed forward to open the huge parcel. He opened it and saw ..... a big, new, shiny bicycle. He was very happy.

Then, later on in the evening, the phone rang, and the boy answered it. His grandmother was on the other side of the line:

"Did you like the bicycle that I sent you?" she asked.
The boy replied, "You did not send the bicycle, the mailman did**.**"

This shows that the boy did not understand that the postman only delivered the bicycle, and did not send it.

In the same way, when good happens to us, or when we get a reward, we should thank Allah, because He is the one who sent it to us.

To be thankful to Allah is an important part of worship, or faith in Islam. Imam Ali (A) has said,

> *"Iman (faith) is divided into two halves: one half lies in patience and the other in THANKFULNESS".*

People often ask how you can call being thankful an act of worship, but Prophet Muhammad (S) explains to us in very simple words the following,

> *"There are people who worship Allah for the sake of (fulfilling their) desires and that is the worship of business people. And verily there are those who worship Allah out of fear of Him, this is the worship of slaves. But there are those who worship out of thanks giving to Him, this being the worship of free minded people is the best of worship"*

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The Holy Qur'an Surah 27, Ayat 40, declares,

> ***"...and he who is grateful, verily he is grateful to his own self, and whoever is ungrateful, then verily My Lord is Self-Sufficient and Bounteous."***

A thankful person always benefits, from Allah, as well as the people he lives with, as the following hadith shows:

> *"That man best deserves a kindness who, when he is put off, bears it patiently; when he is refused, excuses it; and when he receives it, Is THANKFUL.*"

Allah does not require our thanks, He does not benefit from it in any way. As always, the reason why Islam asks us to perform any action is so that we may benefit from it ourselves. By thanking Allah, we make ourselves remember that it was He who granted us His blessings; it was not just our own work.

If we thank Allah, and show our appreciation, then with His infinite Grace, He will grant us even more. In Qur'an, Surah 14 Ayat 7, we are told,

> ***"If you are grateful I will increase My favors unto you..." (Holy Quran; 14:7)***

But instead of thanking Allah we tend to do the opposite. We feel that we do not have enough. We always want more games, toys, clothes or shoes. Or we complain that we are always unlucky.

How should we be thankful?

First and foremost we can be thankful by being happy with what we have. It's alright to want something better in life and work hard to achieve this but if all we do is complain then we are being ungrateful.

After we offer our prayers, we should go into Sajdah, and actually talk to Allah, thanking Him for the favors we received that day, thanking Him that no accident occurred, that we have been given another day to live.

Also we should remember that thanks should not be just in prayers or in words, but in action. The best way to thank Allah is do something to help other human beings, and to pass on our goodness to others because Allah is above any needs.

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18.1 Worksheet: Gratitude to Allah

Fill in the blanks:

1. _____ or Shukr means to _____ Allah for all His blessings.

2. Being thankful to Allah is also an act of _____.

3. One of the ways of thanking Allah is to stop _____.

4. If we think that good things that happen to us because we are smart enough to make them happen then we are being _____ to Allah.

5. The best way to thank to Allah is to _____ other human beings.

Extra Credit

Make a list of at least 15 things you can thank Allah for.

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Chapter 19: Who Has Faith? Characteristics of a Believer

The Messenger of Allah [s] said:

"Whoever is pleased with his good actions and displeased with his bad actions is a faithful."

Think of the feeling of happiness you get when you see a poor needy man and help him with some money.

How elated you become if you recite some verses of the Holy Qur'an at dawn.

How great a sense of satisfaction you get when you please your parents.

There is a feeling of happiness and satisfaction when doing good acts and a feeling of discomfort when doing wrong. This feeling is called our conscience.

The Islamic religion wants to bring out the conscience in us so that we commit beneficial acts and avoid evil ones. The aim is to speed us on our way to becoming people with true faith.

The Messenger Muhammad [s] says:

"The faithful is he whose evil deeds displease him."

This Prophetic tradition means that a believer is displeased with his own self when committing a misdeed and feels a strong aversion to doing it again.

The Holy Prophet[s] further describes the believer in his sermon:

"Blessed is he who earns his living through lawful ways and he whose inward status is good, outward is decent; spends his surplus wealth in charity; abstains from excessive talking; people remain safe of (any) evil from him; he treats others with justice. Surely whoever believes in Allah fears Him, and whoever fears Allah guards himself against the evils of this world."

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A believer is one who deserves Allah's pleasure and for him there will be a good life and happiness in this world and in the Hereafter. The following traits are indigenous to him:

1. Doing what are lawful and righteous deeds.
2. Having good morals and treating people with respect.
3. Having a purified heart and soul, neither hating others nor being hypocritical.
4. Spending whatever he has out of his wealth in the cause of Allah i.e. as charity.
5. Being offensive to no one.
6. Causing no harm to others.
7. Respecting other people's rights.

These characteristics are only found in truly faithful persons who know Allah well and fear His punishment because those who know Him do not think much of this world's life and wish only to please Him and be rewarded in the life hereafter.

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19.1 Worksheet: Who Has Faith

1. Which of the following are signs of people who have faith?

   a. They respect other people's rights
   b. They spend for the cause of Allah
   c. They are not hypocritical
   d. All of the above

2. A person who has faith is self _____ and tries to do _____ things.

   a. righteous; lawful
   b. conscious; funny
   c. absorbed; selfish
   d. trained; perfect

3. Prophet Mohammed [s] has said: The faithful is he whose _____ deeds _____ him.

   a. evil; displease
   b. bad; hurt
   c. good; come in handy to
   d. children's; please

4. What is something you can do to practice good faith?

   a. Eat good food every day
   b. Treat people with respect and kindness
   c. Wear very expensive clothes
   d. None of the above

5. How much importance would a believer give to worldly things?

   a. A lot
   b. As much as all his friends
   c. As much as his parents
   d. Very little

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